



Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 151

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 2005

No. 40

House of Representatives

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN ED CASE OF HAWAII FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 2005

REGARDING THE RECENT RUNNING OF THE HONOLULU MARATHON AND GREAT ALOHA RUN BY OUR BRAVE SOLDIERS IN AFGHANISTAN

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide some good news out of Afghanistan.

On December 11, 2004, members of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment of the United States Army organized and completed an Afghanistan adjunct to the Honolulu Marathon in the Tarin Kowt area of the country. Subsequently, on January 30, 2005, the 25th Infantry Division (Light) Headquarters Company personnel organized the running of Honolulu's Great Aloha Run in-country.

Both races were resounding successes. On February 15, 2005, I wrote to the President to ensure that he was aware that these events had occurred. I am including a copy of my letter to follow these remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that you and our colleagues are as impressed as me that members of our Armed Forces were able to organize and conduct such multi-faceted events, given the perilous security situation throughout most of the country and these soldiers' many other duties. I urge all other members to join me in lauding these troops for their accomplishments and spirit.

WASHINGTON, DC, February 15, 2005.
The Hon. GEORGE W. BUSH,

President of the United States of America, The
White House, Washington, DC

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: This is to ensure your awareness of two recent events in Hawaii and Afghanistan that I am sure you will agree represent the best of our country.

As you know, my Hawaii is ideally suited and dedicated to physical fitness. It is also home to a larger component of our country's armed forces, over 10,000 of whom are now serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Two major events on Hawaii's outdoor calendar are the Honolulu Marathon, reportedly the third largest marathon event worldwide, and the Great Aloha Run, an event attracting thousands of residents and visitors. This year, the organizers of both events teamed with our military to recognize our troops serving overseas, many of whom participate in these and other events when they are home in Hawaii, in organizing and conducting these events in Afghanistan as well.

Specifically, on December 11, 2004, Honolulu Marathon day, members of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, USA organized and completed the Honolulu Marathon--Afghanistan in the Tarin Kowt area of the country. And on January 30, 2005, Great Aloha Run day, the 25th Infantry Division (Light) Headquarters Company personnel organized the running of the Great Aloha Run--Afghanistan.

All 153 participants in the Honolulu Marathon--

Afghanistan were treated like every finisher of the Marathon: each received the same medals, certificates and tee-shirts. An official timing system was flown in and the finishing times were placed on the Marathon's website along with all other finishers from the race in Honolulu. I would like to highlight the reaction of the winner of the Marathon, First Lieutenant Mike Baskin; he burst into tears as he remembered his four fellow soldiers who had recently been killed.

While only military personnel ran in each race, those who ran in the Great Aloha Run-- Afghanistan endured sub-freezing temperatures and, more importantly, raised money for local Afghan charities, including an orphanage in downtown Khowst. Because of its shorter distance, the race was conducted in four separate locations throughout the country, including Bagram Airfield and Forward Operating Base Salerno.

I wanted you not only to know of these heartwarming efforts, but also have the opportunity to provide whatever recognition you may wish to the organizers of both events in both Hawaii and Afghanistan and, more important, to our great troops, who demonstrated the finest spirit of our armed services under difficult circumstances. Mahalo nui loa!

With Aloha,

Ed Case,
U.S. Congressman,
Hawai'i, Second District.